



2018 Rifle Hunting Regulations and Information

Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

Storms and waters of the Gulf of Mexico constantly shape Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. The tidal marshes, long narrow sloughs, grasslands, live oaks and red bay thickets provide essential habitat for resident and migratory wildlife.

Recreational opportunities abound at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. Among these opportunities is hunting. All Texas State Hunting Regulations apply to hunting on Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

Licensed hunters are responsible for knowing and following state hunting laws. Texas state hunting laws are not listed in this brochure. For complete information, hunters are encouraged to read the *2018-19 Outdoor Annual Hunting Regulations* or to contact Texas Parks & Wildlife at 800/792-1112 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

Aransas Rifle Season

The rifle season is three separate 5-day periods (Saturday through Wednesday):

Rifle 1: November 3-7

Rifle 2: November 24-28

Rifle 3: December 8-12

Hunt Area

A designated portion of the Refuge is open to rifle hunting (19,668 acres). The Hunt Area opens at 5:00 a.m. and closes at 8:00 p.m., road and other conditions permitting. Only permitted hunters are admitted into the Hunt Area. Hunting is not allowed within 100 yards of any road. Hunters may not shoot across roads. No portion of the Hunt Area can be reserved—the entire Hunt Area is open to first come, first served.

Closed Areas

Closed areas are delineated with “AREA CLOSED” signs. Any portion of the Hunt Area may be closed due to unusual conditions without prior notification. It is the hunter’s responsibility to know his/her location.

Youth Hunters/Observers

In order to foster the sport of hunting, youth hunters (17 and under) may hunt for FREE. Youth hunters must possess a Texas hunting license, Hunter Education certificate or one-time deferral, and abide by all Refuge regulations. Youth are the sole responsibility of the adult hunter or observer and must remain within normal voice control of the hunter at all times. Each adult hunter may supervise one youth hunter.

Refuge Regulations

In addition to state laws, the following conditions apply on Aransas National Wildlife Refuge:

Permits

Hunters must have a valid Aransas Rifle Season Permit to hunt on the Refuge. Hunt permit must in hunter’s possession and the vehicle pass must be placed on the windshield of vehicle.

Legal Species & Bag Limit

Only hunting of white-tailed deer and feral hogs is allowed during the Aransas Rifle Season. As part of a hunter’s annual statewide bag limit, hunters may take:

Two white-tailed deer (either sex). No bonus tags are allowed. Hunters must legally tag harvested deer immediately upon kill and log the harvest at the Refuge Hunt Check Station. **No limit on feral (wild) hogs.**

Scouting Access

Permitted hunters may scout and place blinds or stands in the Hunt area from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the following dates:

Rifle 1: November 2

Rifle 2: November 23

Rifle 3: December 7

Each permitted hunter may bring one observer/helper during scouting only.

Weapons

No weapons are allowed during scouting. All weapons used for hunting must be unloaded, cased and remain in the vehicle while on the Refuge during transport to and from hunt areas. Hunters may only use center-fire rifles in accordance with state law. Target shooting or the discharge of a weapon except to hunt is not permitted. We prohibit hunters using handguns during the rifle hunts.

Hunter Orange

Hunters must wear at least 400 square inches of hunter orange including 144 square inches visible in the front and rear. Some hunter orange must appear on headgear.

Flagging

Only color-coded biodegradable flagging is authorized for marking trails and hunt stands. Flagging will be checked upon entrance to hunt area. The use of any other non-biodegradable flagging or failure to remove flagging at the end of the hunt is considered littering and is subject to a fine.

Rifle 1: Orange flagging

Rifle 2: Red flagging

Rifle 3: Yellow flagging

Hunting Stands

Portable stands and blinds are allowed on the Refuge during the Rifle Hunt. There is a limit of two portable stands per permitted hunter. Hunters may set up equipment during scouting, but it must be removed by the end of their hunt. Stands or blinds must be a minimum of 100 yards away from any road. Hunters may not:

- Drive any objects (nails, wire, screws, bolts) into any trees or other objects.
- Cut any part of a tree.
- Hunt from existing structures.

Field Dress

Hunters must field dress harvested game in the Hunt Area. A meat cooler is available for dressed game at the Refuge Hunt Check Station. Space is limited; please be respectful of other hunters. Harvest may NOT be processed in the field; facilities are available at Check Station for processing game.

Check Station

All hunters are required to sign in/out at the Refuge Hunt Check Station and successful hunters must report their harvested deer and hogs. This must be done in writing on the Harvest Report form located at the Refuge meat cooler.

Bait

The use or possession of bait, salt or any ingestible attractant is strictly prohibited on the Refuge. Use of scents is permitted.

Alcohol

Hunters are not allowed to use/possess alcohol on the Refuge or be under the influence of alcohol.

Oil and Gas Facilities

For your safety, all oil and gas facilities (pads, pumps, buildings, etc.) are off limits. Please stay 100 yards away from any designated oil and gas facilities.

Travel

Only street legal cars and trucks are allowed in the Hunt Area. Vehicles must remain on roads. Parking is allowed along roadsides in such a manner that will not interfere with normal traffic flow. The speed limit is 35 mph unless otherwise posted. All Texas driving laws apply to Refuge roads. Blocking of any roadway or gate is strictly prohibited.

Fishing Access

Fishing is not allowed in the Hunt Area. Fishing access to San Antonio Bay is permitted at multiple access points on the refuge tour loop only from April 15-October 15. Year-round pier and wade fishing access are open at the Fishing Pier Area only. Check with the Visitor Center for more information.

Hunters are accountable for their own entry and exit from the Hunt Area.
While on the Refuge, hunters are subject to inspection by state and federal officers at any time.

For Additional Information

Aransas National Wildlife Refuge
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Austwell, Texas 77950
361/349-1181
E-mail: AransasHunts@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Aransas/>

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